

# CHATS WITH JB

SEAMOUS

Well, hello friends. Just want to check in with you this week. I have some sad news...albeit personal, still sad. I hope you have good news for me.

On Monday, July 3, 2023, we had to put down our inside dog. He was a rescue and we had him a little more than 10 years. His name was Seamous. We kept his given name from his previous owners that turned him in to the pound. Seamous was a good boy but was food obsessed. He had to eat when we were eating and would bug you until you gave him something. He looked mostly like a terrier but was just a mut; but we loved him. In his hay day with us he gained up to 39 pounds. The vet scolded us, so we got him down to 29 pounds and he looked good. But the last few months, he lost lots of weight. At his death, he weighed 18 pounds and looked frail. He ate well, considering, but then we had to help him eat and syringed his water the last 2 weeks of his life. I've shed many a tear over our fella. But he isn't suffering now. Sigh.

Thanks for letting me vent to you about our beloved boy. You can tell that I love animals, can't you! But this brings up an issue that I think is important. And that is the problem with *open food containers* in the forest. People, when camping or hiking, can forget to keep food in sealed containers and then placed on a rope or in a vehicle away from people. Bears have a great sense of smell and will follow their noses to what they think will be a "honey pot." Remember Pooh and his honey pots! They can do great damage to property and limb if correct procedures aren't followed. We just had to close another campground because of bear activity.

Let me ask: Do you know what happens to bears that repeatedly raid your garbage? They will be caught and moved once... if they continue to be a problem, TWRA will determine how to handle the situation which could include euthanizing the bear to protect the public. But if we, as visitors in *their* territory, take responsibility and do our best to use closed, airtight food containers and place garbage in bear proof garbage cans, then we reduce the probability of bear raids. Another point: don't burn chicken bones or any type bones in your campfire because that attracts those gorgeous animals too! I've mentioned it previously, but an excellent website is [www.bearwise.org](http://www.bearwise.org). It gives great info along these lines.

Well, that's it for now folks. I think of Seamous everyday and will never forget him. Thanks for allowing me to share my thoughts with you. I hope we don't need to discuss any sad dog or bear (or other animal) stories in the future! So for now... stay safe, protect our bears and enjoy our beautiful Cherokee National Forest today!!!



Sunset from the Chilhowee Overlook on the Ocoee Ranger District. USDA Forest Service photo by Stephanie Sabin.

